

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

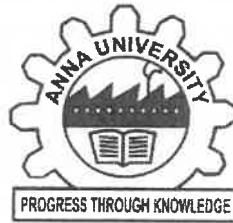
Between

International Forum for Information Technology in Tamil (INFITT) USA



and

Anna University
Chennai, INDIA



Memorandum of Understanding between International Forum for Information Technology in Tamil (INFITT) and Anna University, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

Preamble

International Forum for Information Technology in Tamil (here after INFITT) is an international non-profit Organisation (registered in California, USA, started in 2000) committed to promoting development of basic technology and advanced applications in the area of Tamil Computing and Information Technology through networking of academic researchers and independent professionals on a global scale.

Anna University (here after AU) is a public University located Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India (started in 1978, currently the biggest Technical University in India in terms of offerings and student enrolment (16000 students) with a vision is to be a leading centre of excellence in teaching, learning, research and scholarship. The mission is to be a leading centre of academic excellence in producing intellectual, professionally competent and capable graduates with special emphasis on the social, economical and cultural needs of India.

INFITT and AU therefore agree to establish a program for academic cooperation in areas of mutual interest and competence and in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth in this memorandum of understanding (MoU). The MoU consists of two distinct parts, first to define a long term perspective on collaboration avenues between the two institutions and a second part dealing with collaboration on short time scale (max. 3 years).

MOU part I - long term collaboration between INFITT and Anna University.

A. Objectives

The objective is to foster collaboration, to provide opportunity for global experience and to facilitate advancement of knowledge on the basis of reciprocity, best effort, mutual benefit and frequent interactions, To achieve this, INFITT and AU agree on the following initiatives in the area of Indic language computing technologies with special focus on Tamil :

- a) to exchange information on research and educational programmes
- b) to exchange information on teaching, learning material and other literature relevant to their educational and research programmes
- c) to jointly organize short-term continuing education programmes on topics of mutual interest and
- d) to invite each other's members and experts to participate therein
- e) to jointly organize seminars, conferences, or workshops on topics of mutual interest and to invite
- f) each other's faculty to participate therein; and
- g) to jointly propose and engage in research or training programmes for students at the undergraduate, graduate and doctoral levels and for the faculties

INFITT and AU further agree that detailed terms and conditions that guide each activity identified above will be separately determined and agreed upon by the two institutions. These terms shall include a technical description of the proposed activity, financial arrangements, and person(s) responsible for its implementation, etc.

B. Institutional Membership of INFITT

In addition to Individual membership, INFITT has a provision for Academic Institutions, Govt. Agencies and private companies to collaborate by becoming an Institutional Member. In order to provide a regular channel for communication and academic collaboration, AU will become formally an "Institutional Member" of INFITT initially for a period of five years, renewable. Institutional Members of INFITT participate in regular technical discussions of its working groups and mailing lists, take part in elections of the office-bearers and play active role in INFITT's flag event Tamil Internet Conferences. Both parties shall name a "liaison person" from each institution to promote regular communication and exchange of ideas.

C. Tamil Computing, Information Technology Workshops

INFITT and AU shall organise at least two technical tutorial type workshops per year on select key basic and advanced applications areas of Tamil computing (such as smart language input, voice recognition and text-to-speech synthesis, machine translation of texts amongst Indic languages and with leading global languages such as English, French and German, Natural language processing, automated optical recognition of text printed as well hand written, Tamil usage in portable devices and platforms, cloud computing, e-commerce,...)

D. Research and Development in the area of Tamil computing and Information Technology

Towards the ultimate goal of development of a full-fledged Department on Tamil computing and IT, INFITT will work closely with AU in providing leadership in the design and guidance for research projects for students in this domain at various levels; INFITT will help identify suitable experts on an international level who can be mentors and guides to the students and faculty of core science and computer science departments of AU.

E. Participation in the annual Tamil Internet Conferences

The Tamil internet conference is the annual flag event of INFITT, held alternatively in India and abroad. It provides a technical forum for techies working in the development of Tamil computing technology and its diverse applications, particularly in the area of computer-aided teaching and learning of Tamil (virtual classroom) and general public to exchange progress and issues. AU will play a key role in supporting the TIC financially and also on the design and content delivery.

Part 2 of the MOU - short term collaboration -Hosting of the next Tamil Internet Conference

A key event that INFITT organizes each year is "Tamil Internet Conference (TIC)", a global technology oriented event that draws technology developers from academia and private sector and also those who work on Computer applications in Tamil and increasing the Tamil content part of the Internet. TICs are held once a year, alternatively in India and abroad. TICs have been organized at Singapore, Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur), USA (San Francisco), Germany (Koeln) and in India at Chennai, Chidambaram (Annamalai University), Pondicherry (Pondicherry University), Gandhigram (Gandhigram Rural Institute -University) and Coimbatore (Tami Nadu Agricultural University). This year, INFITT just successfully conducted TIC 2018 at the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore during July 6-8, 2018. Work just started on identifying the venue and the lead host to co-organize the TiC 2019 conference. Anna University has expressed interests to hold this event in its University campus. This part of the MOU defines the terms for INFITT and Anna University to co-organize the event. In this MOU, the term "organizer" refers to INFITT and "host" to Anna University.

TICs in general is organized over a 3-day period consisting of three main hubs:

- a conference hub (consisting of formal research paper presenters),
- a community hub (consist of tutorial workshops on all key areas of Tamil computing for the students) and
- a public forum (makkal-mandram, consisting of lectures, tutorials and exhibitions of software) for the general public.

The conference is organized through close collaboration between three committees:

- an international organising committee IOC,
- a conference program committee CPC and
- a local organizing Committee LOC.

As "holders" of this conference series, INFITT EC in consultation with the hosts and sponsors, announces the composition of all three conference committees. In close consultation with CPC, IOC defines the scope, special theme of focus and on invited speakers of the conference. CPC undertakes the call-for-papers, receives the abstracts from potential paper presenters, and after internal evaluation select the list of papers to be presented orally or as posters. CPC also works out the conference schedule (who talks what and when) and also the content of the opening and closing sessions of the conference that usually involve several invited guests and speakers. LOC is the principal committee that takes responsibility to organize all local logistics - infra-structure required (conference halls, audio, video support and local publicity), catering, accommodation and transport arrangements for the conference delegates.

LOC is headed by a nominee of the key host organization, assisted by members from the host and other lead sponsors or co-host institutions.

As per this MOU, Anna University is expected to take the role of "lead host" in organizing the next Tamil Internet Conference during the window period TIC 2019 -2021. Its nominee will head the LOC and the Anna University will provide all required infra-structure needed (conference halls with internet access, audio, video support) and also publicise the conference extensively in the host country. Anna University will also provide manpower support in the form of University Professors who will organize the local publicity during the months prior to the conference and a team of volunteers (students and staff) during the conference day.

INFITT for its part, will take full financial responsibility for the conference organization. It will secure required funding through participation of other academic and social organizations as "co-hosts" or as "sponsors". If requested by INFITT, Anna University will also operate a special bank account for a 1 year period maximum (to be closed one month after the conference after settlement of all the bills). Transactions through this bank account shall be fully transparent (e-banking) to the key office-bearers of INFITT (Chair, Vice-Chair and Executive Director). Though INFITT expects some financial support from the host Anna University, latter (Anna University) shall not be responsible for any net losses that may occur for hosting the conference at the Anna University campus.

F. Coordination /Liaison channels


Both INFITT and AU shall name a "liaison person" from each institution to promote regular communication and exchange of ideas. In addition, a coordination committee will be formed consisting of i) the Dean, Engineering Sciences, ii) Coordinator/Liaison of AU; iii) Chair, INFITT and iv) Liaison of INFITT. This coordination committee will periodically review and identify ways to strength the cooperation between the two institutions.


G. Tenure and Termination

This MoU will take effect from the date it is signed by representatives of the two institutions. It will remain valid for three years, and may be continued thereafter after suitable review and agreement. Either institution may terminate the MoU by giving written notice to the other institution six months in advance. Once terminated, neither INFITT nor AU will be responsible for any losses, financial or otherwise, which the other institutions may suffer. However, both institutions will ensure that all activities in progress are allowed to complete successfully.

This MoU is signed subject to approval of the respective academic/administrative bodies.


Prof. M. K. Surappa
Vice-Chancellor


Dr. Appasamy Murugaiyan
Chair, INFITT


Prof. J. Kumar
Registrar

Date: 6-12-2018.


Prof. N. Rajendran
Director
Centre for International Affairs

Date: 6-12-2018.